Tourism, Culture and Recreation
Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
July 3, 2008

Aboriginal Groups Provided $95,000 in Funding to Support Cultural Heritage Initiatives

Aboriginal groups across the province are receiving funding from the Provincial Government to support initiatives that will safeguard Aboriginal traditions and cultures for generations to come.

"Budget 2008 made provision for an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program, a one-year pilot project designed to address the increasingly urgent need to preserve Aboriginal culture," said the Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. "The program aims to assist Aboriginal groups throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to develop the capacity to document, to preserve, and to pass on traditional culture such as language, traditional skills, or cultural practices."

"Aboriginal peoples are great contributors to this province's rich cultural heritage," said the Honourable Patty Pottle, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. "The funding announced today is a clear recognition by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador of the importance of celebrating and preserving these traditions."

Minister Jackman noted the program funding includes the $50,000 announced in Budget 2008 to implement an Intangible Cultural Heritage Strategy for Aboriginal peoples and, in many cases, will build on existing efforts initiated by Aboriginal organizations, including: language programs that build pride and establish identity; traditional music programs for children; and, events that encourage the interaction of elders and children through storytelling, craft, and going out on the land.

"In addition to the funding, all projects will be able to access professional advice from an Intangible Cultural Heritage Officer, employed through the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, who will provide direction on best practices in collection, preservation and documentation," said Minister Jackman.

An advisory committee composed of representatives of Aboriginal groups in the province was formed for the development, promotion, and evaluation of program applications.

The development of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program is one of several priorities outlined in the 2006 Provincial Government's Cultural Strategy, *Creative Newfoundland and Labrador* which committed $17.6 million over three years to cultural initiatives in the province.

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BACKGROUNDER

The following groups have received funding from the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program to support

initiatives to preserve and promote Aboriginal heritage and culture.

2008-05737/

Miawpukek Band Government, Conne River - $15,000 to deliver Aboriginal programs at the Arts and Exploration Centre throughout the summer. These programs will educate and inform residents, visitors and students of the area about the rich heritage and culture of the Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland, including their traditions, customs, religion, land usage, arts and crafts. The program is also providing $1,000 to support the Traditional Powwow at Conne River, July 3-6, 2008.

Makkovik Inuit Community Government – $5,000 to revive the traditional skill of drum-making in Makkovik by holding a community workshop.

Labrador Metis Nation (LMN) – $15,000 to undertake the collection, preservation and celebration of intangible cultural heritage. LMN employees will receive professional training to enable them to gather information from knowledge-holders in the Inuit-Metis communities in southern Labrador.

Torngâsok Cultural Centre – $15,000 to undertake an inventory of traditional knowledge, language and skills in the communities of Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik, Postville and Rigolet.

Tshikapisk Foundation, Sheshatshiu – $15,000 to support the Innu Banner Project that will give Innu youth the opportunity to explore their personal and cultural identity, family stories, observations and goals through the media of photography, video and audio recording.

Federation of Newfoundland Indians – $15,000 to gather, document and preserve Aboriginal traditional knowledge in the affiliated Mi'kmaq band councils.

Sheshatshiu Innu Band Council – $10,000 to document the terms associated with fauna (animals, birds, insects, fish, amphibians) in the Innu language. This project was undertaken in collaboration with Memorial University's Department of Linguistics and the CURA project for Innu Language Development. The field research will be conducted by Peter Armitage, an anthropologist familiar with the Innu language, who has 20 years experience in conducting interviews with Innu experts on topics relating to the environment.

St. George's Indian Band Council – $1,000 to support cultural activities on Aboriginal Day that reflect the Mi'kmaq culture, including language, spirituality, crafts, games, foods and history.

Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network – $1,000 to support a workshop that recognizes the role of Aboriginal women as leaders and nurturers in their communities.

Port au Port Indian Band and Indian Head First Nations Band – $1,000 to support traditional Mi'kmaq activities on Aboriginal Day.

Exploits Native Women's Association – $1,000 to support an Elders Feast that includes a craft and cultural awareness session.

2008 07 03 9:40 a.m.

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